SNAPCHAT PLANETS

A Complete Guide to the Friend Solar System

What every planet means · How the ranking algorithm works

Why your position changes · Practical tips to improve your rank

2026 Edition

Understanding Snapchat Planets

Snapchat has always had a talent for turning everyday social interactions into something visual and playful. With the launch of Snapchat+ in June 2022, the platform introduced one of its most talked-about premium features: the Friend Solar System, more commonly known as Snapchat Planets. The concept is elegant in its simplicity — you are the Sun at the centre, and your eight closest friends orbit around you as planets, each one assigned according to how often and how meaningfully you interact with them.

Mercury sits closest to the Sun and represents your number-one friend on the app. Neptune, at the far edge of the system, belongs to the person you interact with the least among your top eight. Every planet in between tells a story about the health, frequency, and depth of a particular friendship. The feature updates automatically as your interactions evolve, which means your social solar system is a living, breathing map of who matters most to you on Snapchat right now.

For most users, the first question is simply: where am I in my friend's solar system? To find out, you tap the small gold 'Best Friends' badge on their profile. If you are in their top eight, a planet animation reveals your position. If the badge reads 'Friends' instead, you are in their top eight but they are not in yours — or vice versa. The system is private by design; no one can browse your complete solar system except you.

Why Snapchat Built This Feature

The Friend Solar System did not appear by accident. Snap Inc. was looking for ways to give Snapchat+ subscribers a genuinely engaging reason to pay the monthly subscription fee, beyond simple cosmetic upgrades. By gamifying friendship itself, they created something users actually talk about. Teenagers screenshot their planet positions and share them. Friends compare rankings. The feature sparked a cultural moment — and an entirely new vocabulary around digital closeness.

There is also a clear strategic dimension. The more users engage with the feature, the more time they spend on Snapchat. Checking your planet position requires visiting profiles, sending snaps, and maintaining streaks — all of which feed back into the algorithm and deepen platform engagement. It is a clever loop that benefits both the user, who gets a fun visual representation of their friendships, and Snap, whose daily-active metrics improve as a result.

> *"The closer a planet is to the Sun, the more you interact with that friend. It's a simple idea that turns something invisible — friendship strength — into something you can actually see."*

The Eight Planets — What Each One Really Means

Each planet in Snapchat's solar system has its own colour scheme, visual style, and emotional meaning. Understanding them helps you decode not just where someone sits in your orbit, but what that position says about the friendship itself. Here is a full walkthrough of all eight, starting from the closest and working outward toward the edge of the solar system.

Mercury — Position #1

Visual: Red planet with crimson hearts

Mercury is your absolute closest friend on Snapchat. You exchange snaps and messages with this person more than anyone else — often daily, sometimes several times a day. The bond here goes beyond a casual chat; it reflects a friendship built on consistent, mutual engagement. Reaching Mercury in someone's solar system is a genuine signal that you are a central part of their digital social life.

Venus — Position #2

Visual: Warm pink planet with multicolour hearts

Venus represents your second-closest connection. Interactions are frequent and warm, sitting just a step below Mercury in engagement level. If you are someone's Venus, it means they genuinely value your presence in their digital life, even if one or two other friends edge ahead of you in sheer volume of daily exchanges.

Earth — Position #3

Visual: Blue-green planet with a moon and stars

Earth sits at the third position, representing a solid and reliable friendship. You and this person keep in touch regularly, even if the exchanges are not quite as intense as your top two. Think of it as a dependable orbit — always present, always consistent.

Mars — Position #4

Visual: Red planet with stars

Mars signals a good friendship with consistent but somewhat less frequent contact. You might go a day or two without snapping, but you always come back into each other's orbit. The connection is real and valued; it simply operates at a more relaxed pace than the inner three.

Jupiter — Position #5

Visual: Soft orange planet with streaks

At the fifth position, Jupiter represents a casual but meaningful friendship. You interact enough to stay in each other's top eight, but the communication tends to happen in bursts rather than as a daily habit. A Jupiter ranking still places you ahead of three others, which is a meaningful indicator of ongoing closeness.

Saturn — Position #6

Visual: Golden planet with a visible ring

Saturn is a friendship that stays steady over time without requiring constant attention. You may not chat every day, but when you do, the connection feels natural and comfortable. The distinctive ring makes this planet instantly recognisable to anyone familiar with the feature.

Uranus — Position #7

Visual: Pale green planet

Uranus indicates limited but ongoing interaction. You are still inside this person's top eight friends — which means something — but there is clear room to grow the friendship if you choose to invest more time and energy into it.

Neptune — Position #8

Visual: Deep blue planet, the furthest orbit

Neptune sits at the edge of the solar system, representing the lowest interaction level among someone's top eight friends. Being here does not mean the friendship is weak — it simply means your Snapchat exchanges are infrequent compared to their other connections. In real life, this person may still be someone you are very close to.

How Snapchat Decides Your Planet Position

Snapchat has never published the precise formula behind its ranking system, but a great deal can be understood from how the feature behaves in practice. The algorithm weighs several types of interaction simultaneously, and it rewards consistency and reciprocity above raw volume. In other words, exchanging ten thoughtful snaps back and forth every day will move you closer to Mercury than sending a hundred one-sided messages that go unanswered.

The most powerful signals appear to be mutual snap exchanges and chat frequency. When both people are actively sending and replying — rather than one person carrying the whole conversation — the algorithm treats this as a genuinely close friendship. Reply speed also plays a meaningful role: responding quickly suggests you are engaged, while leaving messages unread for extended periods gradually pulls your ranking downward over time.

Story interactions contribute as well, though not all in equal measure. Watching a friend's story is a passive signal; replying to it is a much stronger one. Video snaps carry more algorithmic weight than photo snaps, likely because they require more effort to produce and consume. Active streaks provide a steady baseline score, but streaks alone will not save a ranking if all other forms of engagement drop away. A five-hundred-day streak with no accompanying chats or replies can still leave someone orbiting at Neptune.

Rankings are recalculated periodically rather than in real time — typically every few days — which means a single inactive week will not instantly demote you, but a prolonged drop in engagement will gradually move you further from the Sun. The system is dynamic by design: it reflects your friendship as it actually exists right now, not as it once was.

Planets vs. Snap Score vs. Streaks

Many users confuse these three features because they all relate to Snapchat activity, but they measure fundamentally different things. Your Snap Score is a lifetime counter of every snap you have ever sent or received — it never resets and grows indefinitely. It tells you how much you use Snapchat overall, but says nothing specific about who you are closest to.

Streaks, meanwhile, measure daily consistency with a specific person: send at least one snap back and forth every calendar day and your streak survives. Miss a day and it resets to zero. Streaks track dedication and habit, but they do not account for the variety or depth of your interactions.

Planets are different from both. They measure the relative closeness of your top eight friendships based on recent, varied interaction. A high Snap Score does not guarantee a Mercury ranking. A long streak does not either. What moves you up the solar system is genuine, two-way engagement across multiple content types — snaps, chats, stories,

video, and consistent responsiveness over time.

Common Questions and Persistent Myths

Why did my planet suddenly disappear?

The most common cause is that your Snapchat+ subscription lapsed, which immediately hides all Friend Solar System badges. The second possibility is that you dropped out of that person's top eight friends due to reduced interaction. This does not necessarily mean anything negative about the friendship — it is simply a reflection of recent Snapchat activity levels.

Does being Mercury mean I am their best friend?

It means you are their most-engaged-with Snapchat connection right now, which is not always the same as being their closest friend in real life. Someone who rarely uses the app might be a far more important person in your life while showing up as Neptune. The feature measures digital engagement, not emotional depth.

Can I change or control my planet ranking?

Indirectly, yes. If you want to move closer to someone's Sun, increase the frequency and variety of your interactions: send more snaps, reply to their stories, start voice or video chats, and be consistent day over day. Conversely, if you find the feature stressful, you can disable it entirely under Snapchat+ Settings by toggling off the Friend Solar System option.

Why does my ranking in their system differ from theirs in mine?

Because each solar system is calculated independently. You are the Sun of your own system, and they are the Sun of theirs. Your interactions are measured from your account's perspective, and theirs from their account's perspective. Asymmetric rankings — where you are their Mercury but they are your Earth — are entirely normal and reflect genuine differences in engagement patterns between the two accounts.

Is Snapchat Planets available to everyone?

No — the feature is exclusive to Snapchat+ subscribers. As of 2026, a Snapchat+ subscription is billed monthly, with discounted rates available for those who opt into a six-month or annual plan. Free users cannot see or interact with the Friend Solar System at all, even if the person whose profile they visit is a paying subscriber.

A Final Thought

Snapchat Planets is one of the more thoughtful social features to emerge from a major platform in recent years. Rather than showing raw follower counts or engagement

numbers, it translates the texture of a friendship into something immediately understandable: distance. The closer the planet, the stronger the bond — at least as Snapchat measures it.

The feature works best when treated lightly. Use it as a fun way to notice which friendships are thriving and which might benefit from a little more attention. Do not treat a Neptune ranking as a crisis or a Mercury ranking as a guarantee. Friendships are far richer than any algorithm can capture, and the real measure of a close friend has never been how often you press a shutter button.

For a regularly updated breakdown of Snapchat+ features, planet order changes, and step-by-step visual guides, visit snaporbitlab.com.

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